

You've Only Got A Hundred Years To Live

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Summary: Izumi, Fire Lord after her father, Zuko, immovable woman of the west and Princess of Fire. This her life, her beginning, her childhood with her closest friend and massive family. Her aging years and shot with waterbending love Kya, the sister she never had. Her death, at one hundred years.

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****You've Only Got A Hundred Years To Live****

"She's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen Mai" Fire Lord Zuko had declared upon his daughter's birth.

Izumi he named her, referring to the season she was born in, the first spring after the dreadful Hundred Year War, when the orchids could finally bloom without the stress of conflict on the world, when the farmers could farm and the bakers could bake without constantly looking over their shoulder in fear of the Fire Nation. When both Zuko and Mai could live in peace and have their daughter away from the horrid and senseless conflict.

Izumi was the most beautiful thing Zuko had seen and the man loved her from the second he laid eyes on her, so did her mother, despite the short amount of time she was in her baby's life.

Zuko had held her high above him on the balcony of the palace for the entire capital to see. The crowds roared with such patriotism and

glee for the newly born Princess of Fire, Izumi, little baby Izumi. It was the first glimpse she had of the world; the roaring crowds of a nation that would be hers to govern after her father, with the sunset cracking the sky in the distance and her family surrounding her tiny body.

Izumi had such a large family.

There were Uncles Aang and Sokka, Aunts Katara, Suki, Toph, Ty Lee, even a little cousin to be named Rohan soon on the way with her aunt in the face paint. Izumi instantly bonded with the sweet flying lemur Momo who surrounded her and tickled her sweet face, his petite tongue giving her button nose a sprite lick to see if she was really living. Aang and Katara had laughed when Momo was suddenly disgusted with how the little Izumi tasted, at least he would never try to eat her like some wild fruit.

Zuko and the Avatar exchanged looks, the bald master of all elements, her main uncle so happy for his closest friend. Izumi always adored Uncle Aang, how childish he could be despite how old he was always becoming.

Although she was only tiny, Izumi could always remember being in the strong, earthy hands of Aunt Toph, blind as a bat and never able to see how beautiful little Izumi was, even as a baby. Despite being born a firebender the aging master of earthbending still played with Izumi as if she could move rock instead of her glistening ability to create flame.

Toph was almost as good with her as Aang was, although Mai constantly scolded them for being a little rough.

Izumi had the biggest and most loving family any child could ever ask for, and it kept growing and growing as Kya, Bumi, Rohan, Lin and the rest were slowly added to it over the years. So many parties and gatherings when they could all just be together. No brothers or sisters were ever needed when she had so many others to play with, to grow up with.

But then there was Uncle Appa.

How little Izumi had adored Appa as a baby and child. His soft, sweet fur of cream and his moist nose that she would love to explore and play with as she crawled all over the large bison. Izumi purely adored Appa as a child, the lovable mammal was a child's best friend.

And they were the best of friends; the oldest bison in the world and the first child of Team Avatar.

They would play for hours in the courtyard and the commons of the Palace in the capital, Izumi always ecstatic whenever Uncle Aang came flying in on the bison's back with Uncle Sokka and/or Kya. Kya was something else entirely however, like Izumi's sister, but Appa was always on Izumi's mind, when she would see him next and what adventures they would get into around the Fire Nation.

As Izumi approached nine she and Kya actually took the aging mammal around the perimeter of the borders, out and around to Ember Island against her father's wishes to see Ty Lee and some of the majestic

Kyoshi Warriors. The two girls would always make believe they were like Aunt Suki defending the world with glamorous fans and agile moves, mixed in with their budding fire and waterbending. They would always plan trips to the Island, to bask in the presence of Avatar Kyoshi and wonder what it was like to live to two hundred years, to master all four elements and defeat tyrants. It would be the three of them against the world; Izumi the headstrong and all powerful firebender, Kya the wise and collected waterbender like her mother and then their trusted sky bison Appa. Their mode of transport all over the world from crisis to crisis, saving people and bringing justice to the evil.

Until one day, Aang arrived by boat, alone with no Kya and no Appa.

Zuko and Izumi met him at the docks to see the bald man's head bowed in sorrow. Her father went ahead, telling little Izumi to stay and wait to be seen to by the Avatar. Zuko placed his hand on his friend's shoulder and they hugged momentarily.

Izumi was more than a little confused, being no older than eight or nine and still seeing so little of life and the world around her. She was confused why Aang had arrived by boat and not by Appa, no gleaming, toothy smile and no waving Kya from the saddle. No Sokka and no Katara. Only Aang, sad and alone.

Aang knelt before her with a fake smile, as big a one as he could manage given the circumstances.

"Uncle Aang, where's Appa?" The young Fire Princess asked, eyes confused and yet sad in her unknowing. Even as a young child she could tell that something was wrong, that something was sad. Aang began to tear up as he looked at the young girl, he couldn't even tell her for he knew how much she loved the bison.

"Appa's in the Spirit World now Izumi, with Momo and Uncle Iroh." Aang's usually happy voice was so flat and out of tune, so earthy and dry like a grindstone

"When is he coming back?" her voice was that of a six year old, filled with fleeting hopes and dreams as she began to cry too. "We were planning a vacation to Ember Island again, we were gonna make sandcastles with Kya and Auntie Ty Lee" Izumi cried. "He needs to come back soon or it'll be fall and the rain'll come back. He doesn't like the rain that much Uncle Aang."

Zuko came back to them, placing his hand on Aang's shoulder and looking to his daughter with the soft eyes that could mellow a kingdom. "Izumi, Appa can't come back. He has to stay in the Spirit World now" he told his daughter, resolute and heavy with solace, if anything to calm her.

"To look after Momo and Uncle Iroh?"

Zuko hummed in retort and Izumi knew what her father meant; she lunged forward into a hug with the Avatar. "I'm sorry Uncle Aang" Izumi tried to console her figurative uncle, having always been taught to care for those despite how sad she may be.

"But at least he has Momo and Uncle Iroh to keep him company. We'll see him again soon right?" She asked to make the Avatar say something and not break down.

Aang hugged little Izumi tight, as if his own flesh and blood.
"Right, we'll see him soon."

Then the years began to pass like clockwork. Fifteen, in between ten and twenty, and there was time for her buy and time to lose. Twenty two and Izumi began to feel her mother too, slipping away at the hands of disease until eventually she joined Appa in the Spirit World, leaving her and Zuko to care for each other. Thirty three and Izumi suddenly became a they, mothering a child on the way with the father long gone and surrounded by those she really loved, her family, always on her mind.

Kya, more than most, always like a sister or more.

Izumi reached forty five, and then the sea became high. Aang was getting old, feeling the ache in his bones and became too embroiled with his Republic City to deal with anything else. Izumi was feeling bold and wanted one last surge of strength and adventure before she became too old to do anything.

Retirement was vastly approaching, the time where she would have to take the throne for Zuko and rule the Fire Nation into continued decades of peace and prosperity, how difficult that would be she would soon found out, but as Izumi reached forty five, one last adventure was needed.

Who else to dive into it but Kya, the only person she'd really loved.

Of course Izumi loved others; her son Iroh III, Aunts Katara and Toph, her father and dearly departed mother, even Iroh's father at a time. But no one ever had the lasting effect on her as Kya had.

Since they were tiny children playing with Appa, traveling the small perimeter of the Fire Nation and getting into crazy scrapes with Elephant Koi on trips to Kyoshi Island with Uncle Sokka and Aunt Suki. Yes, if Izumi had to love anyone, then let it be Kya.

They were in the Swamp, by the Banyan-grove Tree, alone.

They had ran into a band of rogues and thieves on their week long 'vacation' into the sketchier parts of the Earth Kingdom in search of adventure as Kya was always prone to finding, she lived for adventure. The band had retreated into the Swamp and were thus far eluding the Fire Princess and the Waterbender.

"Just like you to find the one group of bandits that don't want to fight" Kya chuckled as she sat on one of the thicker roots of the tree, closing her eyes and relaxing for a moment.

Izumi turned with a smile already on her older face, it had been too long since they were teens rushing around the Fire Nation and the South Pole or Republic City. She had always admired Kya and while the waterbender was slouching on the root Izumi could only admire her even more.

"Well be fair to them," Izumi breathed in the traces of a laugh, moving to sit next to Kya. "We make quite a pair do we not?"

"Hm, that we do dear" Kya sighed.

They were both rather tired, it had been such a trek across the Kingdom to the Swamp and now Izumi had had enough adventure for her lifetime she was willing to simply let the vagabonds go and be caught by the National Guard or some other force.

Izumi was completely content to sit with Kya and waste their last days of vacation with the Banyan-grove Tree.

Eventually she stirred however, throwing her legs over Kya's and nuzzling up to her. "Do you remember the adventures we used to have around the Fire Nation as children?" She asked, eyes still closed but heart open, hoping Kya was beginning to feel the same about her as Izumi had about Kya almost her entire life, certainly the past years with no significant other but with the longing for her lifelong girl. Only she didn't really know what type of love it was. Was it real, romantic love? Or just a longing to have her sister back again?

"With Appa" Kya stated, sorrow lingering for the long gone bison they both adored. "We used to fly him to Ember Island when our dads were talking about their plans for Republic City."

"We'd build sandcastles and hide in the old family house, build forts out of the good upholstery and sheets that were never used" Izumi continued on for her friend, laughing and smiling away.

Kya suddenly took Izumi's hand and held it up in front of them.

"You know, even though I've seen most of the world and travelled since I was eighteen," she began, turning to look Izumi in the eye. "I would gladly go back and be a toddler with you, any day." She gave Izumi's hand a sweet kiss and then lowered it, still clutching as their hands slid in between their almost bare legs.

"You have been my closest friend Izumi. My sister" Kya finished.

The Fire Princess took a gasp, however no air went in. "Maybe, just this once my dear. Maybe just for now we could be more than friends?"

Kya breathed, slowly and thoughtfully until eventually shaking her head much to Izumi's dismay. It wasn't what she'd wanted but even if Kya said no now, they were already in such a perpetual state of bliss, and they were old, not ancient like their fathers but old enough to be content with the now.

"You're about to be made Fire Lord. As tempting as it to be with you, it's not possible Izumi." It was almost crushing, but then again not, Kya's words didn't say she wouldn't, they said it was too late.

"I'd much rather now be the sister you never had, and for you to be mine."

"Family is more important than love. Isn't it?" Izumi sighed after

Kya was done. It was such a wave a realisation, one that she had had all her life but only really figured out she did. It was kind. Kind and content for the Fire Princess. Izumi wasn't crushed, she was more relieved.

The waterbender hummed her confirmation.

Kya parted their hands and raised her own, twirling her wrist to call forth an orb of swamp water from the lake under the roots. With her fingers snapping she parted the clear liquid from any impurities and then, with another flick of the wrist, snapped the water into ice and into a heart shape. It would symbolise their moment together with harmonious bliss.

"We'll always be family Izumi, no matter what."

The years then began to roll into one another once again, half of the time going by and the other being so boring it blended, one year becoming two or three. It was only when Avatar Korra came on the scene and the world began to become so full of a different kind of life that Izumi took interest away from her son and surrounding family.

Suddenly she became wise, her son became a Commander in the United Forces and Izumi was asked about world issues, taking her father's place as Fire Lord. Then in another blink of an eye she was sixty seven and the world was at peace again, Avatar Korra being a sentinel rather than an Avatar, with her wife Asami and Iroh finding a lovely Earth Government girl to marry. Izumi was blessed with grandchildren.

Izumi remained unmarried. Although Kya married Lin and then she did feel sorrow. But never did Kya forget about her sister far away.

Everyone was moving on as Izumi remained the immovable leader of reason in her borders removed from the rest of the world, and eventually she herself became removed from the world, thinking of dear Appa looking after Uncle Iroh, Momo, Uncles Sokka and Aang and eventually even her father in the Spirit World.

Izumi was ninety nine, dying for more moments where she was a child. Just dreaming of all she'd done and all she hadn't, all she had watched as the world turned and she remained, in her chair either in the Fire Nation or in Republic City, bringing the world into a new era with new people and new values.

At fifteen there may have been time to buy or time to lose, and as Izumi looked at her life, at everyone who had been in it, at how large her family had been, she was thankful, thankful for Aang and her father Zuko being the best of friends rather than enemies.

Thankful for her son Iroh without a father, despite how hard it may have been she wouldn't have had the man any other way.

Above all Izumi was thankful for Appa, for the adventures they had with Kya to Ember Island, and thankful he was her best friend until the end. To Izumi, there wasn't a wish better than Appa and her family, until the day she died.

One hundred years old, she died, with her sister Kya and family surrounding her; the first child of Team Avatar.

End
file.